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SUBJECT: GEORGIA: EFFECTIVENESS OF UN EFFORTS TO COMBAT
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

REF: A. 07 STATE 170451
¶B. 07 TBILISI 1603

¶1. In response to ref A, post provides information on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in relation to the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). This report combines input solicited from Georgian law enforcement officials, international organizations, NGO experts on TIP, and representatives from the UNOMIG office in Tbilisi. As post has noted in previous reports, due to the isolated nature of UNOMIG in the separatist region of Abkhazia, it remains a challenge for our Georgian sources -- who are prohibited from traveling to the region -- to comment with complete certainty on the activities of UNOMIG staff.

¶2. There is no NGO, popular, or government perception that UNOMIG is involved in TIP or SEA in Georgia. The Prosecutor General's office confirmed to us that there have been no investigations of UNOMIG officials in connection with such abuses. Officials from both the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Anti-Violence Network of Georgia, a leading NGO combating crimes against women, told us they had no information connecting UNOMIG personnel to any such abuses.

¶3. UNOMIG officials informed us that SEA issues are handled in the mission by two SEA focal points. Their responsibilities are three-fold: training of all categories of mission staff, dissemination of information, and follow-up on allegations of SEA. In December 2007, UNOMIG's Conduct and Discipline Unit (which was set up in August 2007), completed a round of briefings with all categories of mission staff to refresh everyone's knowledge of UN conduct policies; briefings are also provided to all incoming staff. These briefings contain a specific section on SEA and related issues. The Conduct and Discipline Unit is planning a public information campaign and awareness-raising activities with external partners for the first half of 2008.

¶4. In addition, UN police (UNPOL) facilitated a training seminar on TIP for Georgian law enforcement, civil servants, and Georgian and Abkhaz NGOs in October 2007. A roundtable discussion on TIP was attended by law enforcement officials from Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, and Turkey.

TEFFT